

Personal Stapler
for Every one



BOSTITCH

OBTAINABLE DIRECT FROM
SOLE AGENTS: **HAN KANG CO. UNION BUILDING**

The Hongkong Telegraph

For the Proprietor of
HONGKONG TELEGRAPH,
For and on behalf of
SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST, LTD.
Printed and Published
by **W. H. H. H.**

Price 20 Cents

For
Reservations
Tel 27880

VOL. II NO. 380

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1947.

BRITISH TOMMIES IN ACTION AGAINST ARABS

Bollaert Given Full Power

Indo-China Peace Negotiations

Paris, Dec. 23.—The French Cabinet gave High Commissioner Emile Bollaert full powers today to negotiate peace in Indo-China—so long as he does not deal with the insurgent Viet Nam government of Ho Chi-minh.

Bollaert returned to Paris last week after a conference with Bao Dai, exiled former Emperor of Annam. Annam is one of the five Indo-Chinese states.

French President Vincent Auriol announced today the Cabinet had received messages of support from the Kingdoms of Cambodia and Laos. A French-supported government exists in Cochinchina, another of the states.—Associated Press.

New Political Party Move

Tokyo, Dec. 23.—Usually well-informed Japanese sources said today that 24 Diet members of the Social Democratic Party will quit the party before January 15 and launch a movement for a new party organization against the Katsurama Cabinet.

The Social Democratic Party is at present the strongest in the House of Representatives with 140 members enabling the election of Tetsu Katayama, Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, as Premier last June in the Diet's first implementation of the new constitution.

Informed sources said the majority of the people's Cooperative Party with 32 Diet members was likely to join the new party.

One of the new party's strongest supporters is former Agriculture and Forestry Minister Hirano, also a Social Democrat member whom the premier dismissed a month ago on account of alleged lack of co-operation with the Cabinet.—United Press.

BA MAW FREED

Rangoon, Dec. 23.—Former Premier Ba Maw was released today after four and a half months in jail. He had been held on suspicion of complicity in the assassinations of U Aung San and other leading Burmese Ministers.

Ba Maw told a press conference that he had been kept in solitary confinement under "unpleasant conditions." He appeared on behalf of U Saw, another former Premier, charged with abetting the killings.—Associated Press.

EDITORIAL

The Christmas Message

THE Christmas season, with its oft-repeated theme of peace on earth, with goodwill towards men, is here again. The season, as well as the sentiments it evokes, are welcome because, even if there is little visible evidence either of international peace or goodwill, Christmas does at least promote the desire for both: is a reminder that the world needs an inspiration to achieve either. Originally, and still to many, essentially a religious festival, Christmas, over the centuries has given way to more secular celebrations—of feasting and "jolly-making." Nevertheless it has succeeded in retaining one characteristic—permeation of the spirit and actions of kindness, and in the face of a world still torn by suffering and set at naught by political differences, the people continue to believe in the promise of the angels of "peace on earth among all men of goodwill." Only the unworldly Scrooges deny the spirit of Christmas, the period when the world will give way to service for others, and they are scorned, and justly, by their fellow men. Nevertheless, until the daily-awakened selfishness of Christmas can be sustained through the twelve months that follow, they must lose all their meaning and become relegated to the ephemeral state of emotionalism. If the Christmas message can help the

AID BILL SIGNED

Washington, Dec. 23.—President Truman signed here today the United States appropriation bill providing \$322,000,000 emergency aid to France, Italy and Austria.

The measure, passed in the closing hours of the special session of Congress last Friday, also appropriates \$18,000,000 for China relief.

The only important specification in the plans for stop-gap aid has been caused by the \$57,000,000 cut in the original request of President Truman, upon which Congress insisted.

Decisions on where the programme is to be further "shaved" will not be made without consultation with the countries concerned.

The post-UNRRA relief programme has provided shipments to Italy and Austria through December and aid officials here are now concentrating on January shipments.—Reuter.

OBSTRUCTED BY SOVIETS

Hamburg, Dec. 23.—Jakob Kaiser, chairman of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany, and Dr. Ernst Lemmer, joint chairman of the party in the Soviet Zone, "removed from office" last week on Russian orders, said in Berlin today that only a party congress in Berlin, convened according to the party's regulations and free to make a decision, could decide whether they were to remain in office.

The statement was issued by the party's headquarters in the Soviet sector of Berlin.

In his statement, Herr Kaiser declared that he and Lemmer were "obstructed by the interference of the Soviet military administration" in fulfilling their tasks and responsibilities for the Christian Democratic Union in the Soviet Zone.

From their interference it must be concluded that there was no longer any possibility of taking the democratic way by pursuing an independent policy in the Soviet Zone, he said.

OPPOSED MARXISM

Dr. Kaiser said that it was impossible to continue the Union's policy in the eastern zone of Germany. He would remain in Berlin, where he would serve the re-birth of Germany.

"From the very start the Christian Democratic Union opposed the tendencies prevailing in the eastern zone aiming at Marxism and totalitarian unity," Dr. Kaiser said.

The crisis was reached after the party's refusal to attend the recent People's Congress summoned by the Soviet Union Party.

"By the interference of the Soviet Military Administration this crisis entered the stage which forced me and Herr Ernst Lemmer to make a public statement," Dr. Kaiser added.—Reuter.

Funeral Procession Attacked

JEWISH LEADER'S NARROW ESCAPE

Jerusalem, Dec. 24.—British Tommies fought today against Arabs who attacked highway traffic north of Jerusalem, and Arab bullets raked a Jewish funeral procession on the sacred Mount of the Ascension.

A turbaned Arab in a green sweater, led the high attackers in a wild exchange of fire with a British convoy, Army sources said. The convoy blasted the hillside over Bab el Wad where Arab attackers' bullets wounded a Swedish journalist and eight Jews this morning.

Arab casualties were unknown in the highway duel. One British officer was wounded. Army sources said the convoy swept the attackers' position with 10,000 rounds.

Mr. David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, was reported to have been a passenger in one of the convoy cars under attack. Snipers fired on the funeral procession on the Mount of the Ascension for Robert Stern, English-born Jewish journalist who was killed on Sunday by Arab bullets. Many cars turned back under the fire as the procession neared the Jewish cemetery, near an Arab village.

Arab bands roamed the countryside, attacking freight trains as well as road traffic. Arabs seized a five-car cargo of cement in one attack last night. Another freight train was held this morning but officials said the attackers left empty-handed.—Associated Press.

JEWISH REQUESTS

London, Dec. 23.—Jewish leaders urged Britain to step up Jewish immigration into Palestine immediately and to withdraw armed Arab formations from the area in the Holy Land which will make up the new Jewish state.

Both official British and Jewish sources reported that the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Arthur Creech-Jones, had promised governmental consideration.

A Jewish Agency spokesman said Mr. Creech-Jones was asked to: Withdraw the Arab Legion and Trans-Jordan Frontier Force armed formations from the areas scheduled to become Jewish Palestine. Recognise the existence of Jewish settlement police and allow Jewish communities in the rural areas to protect themselves. Sanction the arming of Jewish foot convoys.

Step up immigration into the Jewish areas of Palestine immediately from the present fixed quota of 1,500 monthly.

Facilitate the implementation of the United Nations decision to set up Arab and Jewish states in Palestine next year by closer co-operation with the Jewish local and national authorities.

The Jewish leaders charged that presence of armed Arab units in Jewish areas "provoked" the inhabitants.

Meanwhile, official British sources said it is "almost certain" the 16,000 uncertified Jewish immigrants held in Cyprus camps will be allowed to enter Palestine legally by May 15 when Britain will surrender her mandate to the UN.—Associated Press.

IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE

Jerusalem, Dec. 23.—The two-masted Haganah schooner, "You Won't Forget Us," carrying about 950 Jewish illegal immigrants—including about 150 children—and a Royal Naval Boarding Party quietly entered Haifa harbour today escorted by a tug.

British destroyers had intercepted the ship yesterday about 105 miles south-west of Haifa.

First to disembark were three men and a woman, said to be foreign correspondents. The police detained them, Jewish sources reported. A number of stretcher cases were taken to hospital.

The refugees, who came from Europe and included two babies born on board, were transported quietly to be taken to Cyprus. They had been at sea for about a fortnight and six days ago were battered by a storm.

In Jerusalem's walled old city this afternoon Jews, Arabs and the police were involved in a gun-battle

with rifles and automatic weapons. It was not clear who was doing the attacking. As the first burst of tommy-gun fire swept through the old city cafes and bazars emptied and Arabs and Jews hurried for shelter.

Mr. David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive and probable Prime Minister of the new Jewish state, escaped unhurt when a Jewish convoy in which he was travelling to Tel Aviv from Jerusalem was shot up by Arabs halfway on the route, a Jewish source in Tel Aviv stated today.

Arab snipers, hidden in prepared ambush positions on the Mount of Olives and Mount Ascension, opened fire today at the funeral of Robert Stern, a British-born Jew murdered in Jerusalem two nights ago.

Mourners threw themselves down or crouched behind tombstones as bullets whizzed overhead, eyewitnesses said. Others arriving in cars ran a gauntlet of fire. Some turned back as British police escorts opened fire with Bren guns.

250 KILLED

The Palestine Government said tonight that since the United Nations partition decision of 23 days ago, 250 people had been killed in Palestine.

These included 109 Jews, 128 Arabs, nine Britons and four others, including a Spanish priest.

The first Provisional Government for the independent Jewish state in Palestine will be set up next March or April after the elections to Palestine Jewry's General Assembly, Mr. David Remez, chairman of the Jewish National Council, Vard Leumi, said tonight.

General Assembly, which normally meets only once or twice yearly, would carry out the functions of a Jewish government until the Jewish state had been properly established—probably next October, he added.

Sporadic firing and grenade throwing on the Tel-Aviv-Jaffa border were reported tonight by Jewish sources in Tel-Aviv.—Reuter.

OFFICIAL CASUALTIES

Jerusalem, Dec. 23.—It was officially announced that strife in Palestine, since the United Nations vote for partition, had claimed 280 lives and 884 persons more had been wounded.

An official casualty list of 864 persons broke down fatalities as: Arabs 133, Jews 107, British Army 8, British police 1, Arab police 9, Spanish priest 1, Arab Legion 1.

The list said that in the first 11 months of 1947 casualties were 82 Britons killed and 275 wounded, 31 Arabs killed and 84 wounded, 43 Jews killed and 83 wounded.

Responsible quarters estimated that nearly 250,000 shots were fired and 10,000 bombs and grenades—mostly hand-made—exploded in Palestine in the 11 months before the partition decision.—United Press.

Police Constable Killed

Police Constable Chan Koon-kau, son of Sergeant Chan Fui, court sergeant at the Kowloon Magistracy, was killed when he fell off a lorry on which he was travelling yesterday from the New Territories to Kowloon.

He fell when the lorry was taking the bend near the Tai Po Road Orphanage, crushed to the hospital, he later died from his injuries.

RICE FOR BRITAIN

Washington, Dec. 23.—The International Emergency Food Council, breaking for the first time its rule barring all rice imports to Europe tonight allocated 24,500 tons of rice to Britain.

The Council described its action as a "temporary exception" covering the first six months of 1948.

The allocations were: Austria 4,600 tons, Belgium 4,500 tons, Britain 24,500 tons, Czechoslovakia 5,000 tons, France 10,000 tons, Greece 4,000 tons, Holland 5,000 tons, Poland 2,000 tons.

The rice will come from Burma, Siam, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt and the United States.

The allocations were made in response to repeated requests from European countries for small quantities of rice for special purposes, including child feeding and hospital use.—Reuter.

Panama Refuses To Lease Military Bases To U.S.

Panama, Dec. 23.—The National Assembly of the Panamanian Republic late last night refused to ratify the agreement signed on December 2, leasing 13 military bases in the territory of Panama, outside the Canal Zone—the five mile strip, on both sides of the Canal, which had been under United States administration since 1904.

The resolution rejecting the agreement was passed unanimously as a crowded gallery cheered and sang the Panamanian national anthem. Shortly before, Senor Florencio Arosemena, the Foreign Minister, had resigned because of his Party's opposition to it.—Reuter.

TO WITHDRAW TROOPS

Washington, Dec. 23.—The United States is to withdraw "as quickly as possible" all troops from 14 defence bases which the Panama Republic has refused to lease to the United States, the State Department announced here tonight.

The decision was taken following the unanimous rejection by the Panama National Assembly of an agreement which would have allowed the United States to occupy these bases for periods of from five to 10 years.

The United States would have to base the defence of the Panama Canal on facilities inside the Canal Zone.

The announcement by the State Department declared: "In accordance with oral agreements made to the Panamanian Government in the course of negotiations, necessary steps will be taken immediately to evacuate all cities in the Republic of Panama outside the Canal Zone where United States armed forces are now stationed. This withdrawal will be completed as quickly as possible, consistent with the number of personnel and the amount of material involved."

The State Department explained that the United States considered these sites essential to an adequate defence of the Canal but did not want an agreement that was not acceptable to the Panamanian people.

The State Department declared that "substantial and repeated concessions had been made during the negotiations on an agreement in an attempt to reconcile Panamanian desires with the defence requirements of the Canal."

STILL FRIENDLY

"Failure to conclude an agreement will not, of course, affect normal friendly relationships between the two countries," the State Department said.

The rejection of the agreement means that United States defence of the Panama Canal will be limited to the facilities available to it within the Canal Zone before United States entry into the second World War.

Earlier today, President Truman summoned his Ambassador to Panama, Brigadier General Frank Hines, to a White House conference as Congressmen claimed that "Communist inspiration" lay behind the Panama Parliament's refusal to approve a new agreement with the United States for the leasing of the 14 bases guarding the Canal.

Military officials here stated that the rejection by the Republic of Panama is a potential threat to United States security—especially to its naval forces.

To face this threat, Mr. Albert Engel, Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee on Defence, announced that his body (Continued on Page 4)

AMERICAN PACT WITH PERSIA

Details Given To UN

New York, Dec. 23.—The United States, acting under its "open diplomatic policy," has reported to the United Nations the details of a pact signed with Persia at Teheran in October, under which a United States military mission will assist in "enhancing the efficiency of the Persian Army."

The pact includes a clause which prevents military experts of other powers from dealing with Persian Army affairs without the consent of the United States.

The agreement is effective from October 6, 1947, to March 20, 1949.

The Persian Government has the right to extend the agreement if it wishes and it can be terminated by either government at any time on a written notice that the government considers it necessary due to domestic disturbances or foreign hostilities.

The duties of the United States mission will be to advise and assist the Persian Ministry of War and the subordinate sections of the Persian General Staff on organization, administrative principles and training methods.

Advice on tactical and strategic plans or operations against a foreign enemy are excluded from the mission's tasks.

TAX-FREE SALARIES

The pact also provides that mission members will be paid by Persia in American currency and not taxed by Persia. The Persian Government will also pay part of the living expenses of the mission and one-third of its transport costs.

In conclusion, the agreement, which was signed by Mr. George V. Allen, the American Ambassador to Persia, and the Persian Minister of War, stated: "So long as this agreement, with its extension thereof is in effect, the Persian Government shall not engage the services of any personnel of any other foreign government for duties of any nature connected with the Persian Army, except by agreement between the two governments."

Members of the United States mission will assume neither command nor staff responsibilities in the Persian Army.

They may, however, make such official inspections and investigations as may be necessary and approved by the Persian Ministry of War and directed by the chief of the mission.

INSPECTIONS AUTHORIZED

The chief of the United States mission and other members of it are authorized to visit and inspect any part of Persian military establishments, and officers in authority must facilitate such inspections and make available plans, records, reports and correspondence as required.

Members of the mission will not concern themselves with secret matters except when essential to their duties and then only with the approval of the Persian War Ministry.

No member of the United States mission may divulge to any foreign government secrets learned as a member of the mission.

State Department officials said tonight that the pact merely continued an arrangement in force since 1942. This was the first time this agreement between the two countries had been brought under the official notice of the United Nations because this was the first time it had been renewed since the United Nations was established.

The terms of the agreement had not been changed in any material way and it was not contemplated that American personnel in Persia would now be strengthened.—Reuter.

TRAIN COLLISION DEATH TOLL

Newwed, near Coblenz, Dec. 23.—Official investigators late this afternoon put the death toll in last night's train accident here at 40 and said 80 injured, with at least 60 percent of the latter in serious condition.—United Press.

Amendments To Bill Will Mean Loss Of Revenue

Paris, Dec. 23.—The French Government will lose about 20 percent of revenue it expected from the special anti-inflation levy by amendments to it decreed during the debate of the measure.

The original estimate was to raise 150,000 million francs. The cost of the concession made by the Government was put at about 30,000 million francs.

On the other hand, the Government has in principle agreed to reduce civil and military estimates for next year by ten percent at the special request of the Finance Commission of the National Assembly.

This would theoretically save rather more than the amount conceded on the special levy.

Surprise was caused when the Assembly adopted the proposal to apply the levy to salaries exceeding 450,000 francs instead of 250,000 as

adopted in the Government's original bill.

A tense political struggle has developed around the "Save the Franc" bill.

Inside parliament, the so-called "third force" middle of the road parties, including Socialists and Popular Republicans, feel that they are masters of the situation in France.

Outside parliament, there is a very natural coolness towards the Government measures and observers are speculating on the possibility of further popular reaction in favour of General de Gaulle, who some people already argue would cost them less.

Accompanying the Government's parliamentary measures are a series of increases in prices of basic products, which affect the ordinary consumer.

Throughout the debate, the Government has been hard pressed by de Gaulle deputies. It remains to be seen, when the dust of the parliamentary fight has died down, exactly what remains of the original governmental ban to stop inflation.

Even before the debate started and apart from considerable concessions already made, the Government rejected in advance certain still more drastic proposals of the Finance Minister, M. Rene Mayer. One of these, which never saw the light of day, was a proposal to issue cards—for a fee—entitling the holder to buy himself certain alcoholic drinks.—Reuter.

TO-DAY
ONLY

QUEEN'S

At 2.30, 5.00,
7.15 & 9.30 p.m.

GRAND DOUBLE ATTRACTION!
ROUND-BY-ROUND! BLQW-BY-BLOW!
JOE LOUIS vs JOE WALCOTT
OFFICIAL HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT FILM

AND
"WITHOUT RESERVATIONS"
Starring CLAUDETTE COLBERT • JOHN WAYNE
AN RKO RADIO PICTURE

— OPENING TO-MORROW —
5 SHOWS — EXTRA PERFORMANCE AT 11.30 A.M.

From the land of joy and romance to
the "laughing place" of your heart!

WALT DISNEY'S
SONG OF THE SOUTH
IN TECHNI-COLOR
Including animated tales of
UNCLE REMUS
WITH WALT DISNEY and LUCILLE PATTON • PATRICIA MARSHALL
JAMES BASKETT • LUKKA PATTON • BOBBY DRISCOLL
DISTRIBUTED BY
RKO RADIO PICTURES
6 HAPPY SONG HITS • "Everybody's Got a Laughing Place" • "Sooner Or Later"
"Zip-A-Dee-Do-Dee" • "Uncle Remus Said" • "Song of the South" • "How Do You Do"

CENTRAL
THEATRE
TO-DAY AT 12.30, 2.30, 5.15, 7.15 & 9.15 P.M.
— FINAL EPISODE —

5 SHOWS
DAILY
The FIGHTING
DEVIL DOGS
WITH
LEE POWELL
HERMAN BRIX
A REPUBLIC SERIAL
— ALSO —

"THE ROYAL WEDDING"

GRAND
OPENING
TO-DAY
PLEASE NOTE SPECIAL SHOWING TIME WITH 15 REELS
It's his Most Romantic role!

GARY COOPER
CECIL B. DEMILLE'S
"The Story of Dr. Wassell" IN TECHNICOLOR
Laraine Day • Signe Hasso • Dennis O'Keefe • Carol Thurston
TO-MORROW EXTRA SHOW AT 12.30 P.M. ONLY
Bud ABBOTT & Lou COSTELLO in "LITTLE GIANT"

SHOWING
TO-DAY
MAJESTIC
AT 2.30, 5.00,
7.20 & 9.40 p.m.

The Yearling
starring
GREGORY PECK
JANE WYMAN
IN TECHNICOLOR
NEXT CHANGE, SCOOP OF THE CENTURY!
"THE BEGINNING OF THE END"

DAB, FLOUNDER AND THE PARKERS GET TOGETHER



SITTING ON THE FENCE BY NATHANIEL GUBBINS

YOUR UNCLE NAT FACES CHRISTMAS (OR CAN HE?)

"WELL," said the Sparrow, setting back in his little armchair in The Nest, "it'll soon be over."

"What an awful way to talk about Christmas," said his wife, "it would serve you right if I spent the holidays with my mother."

"It would probably serve you right, too," said the Sparrow.

"I can't think why I take so much trouble making things nice and comfortable when it's not appreciated."

"Nor do I," said the Sparrow.

"Every Christmas I've worked my claws to the bone cleaning and cooking and doing the decorations," said his wife.

"It's no Christmas for me I can tell you."

"If it's no Christmas for you," said the Sparrow, "and I don't appreciate it, what's it all about?"

"Christmas is Christmas," said his wife.

"And Michaelmas is Michaelmas," said the Sparrow. "So what?"

"That nice Mr Robin's going away," said his wife.

"Good," said the Sparrow.

"He says he wants to give his wife a break as she needs it."

"I'll say she does," said the Sparrow.

"They're going to a lovely hotel by the sea and live in the rain gutter."

"What a break," said the Sparrow.

"There'll be plenty of crumbs and Christmas cake at the hotel," said his wife, "so she won't have to do a thing but enjoy herself."

"At what?" asked the Sparrow.

"Well," said his wife, "they can hop down the sea front in the morning."

"Yes?" said the Sparrow.

"And hop back again for lunch," said his wife.

"What lunch?" asked the Sparrow.

"There's sure to be something left over," said his wife, "and perhaps they could get inside the hotel for Christmas tea."

"And say how do to the hotel cat?" said the Sparrow.

"You always look on the worst side of everything," said his wife.

"And after that they might stay long enough for the Christmas dinner and dancing."

"Don't tell me the Robins dance," said the Sparrow.

"They could watch it," said his wife, "it's ever so lovely watching with the band playing and everything."

"And if they're not eaten by the cat or tramped to death by the dancers, or driven insane by the band," said the Sparrow, "I suppose

it's back to the rain gutter at midnight."

"They'll have had their fun," said his wife.

"If you think that's fun, why don't you go with them?" asked the Sparrow.

"And leave you all alone?" said his wife.

"You needn't worry about me," said the Sparrow.

"If I left you alone," said his wife, "you'd spend all your time at that awful Tree Tops Club."

"I shall do that in any case," said the Sparrow.

"All Christmas?" said his wife, a tear starting in her eye.

"I might come home for a couple of snacks," said the Sparrow, preparing to leave.

"Are you going there now?" asked his wife.

"Certainly," said the Sparrow. "I always need training before Christmas."

Letter from a turkey

DEAR SIR,

As you must have guessed, I am not the turkey who wrote to you just before last Christmas. He was executed and sold in the black market almost before the ink was dry on the paper.

You may be glad to hear that he met his end with considerable fortitude, his last wish being that his body would not be disposed of by racketeers, but that it would provide Christmas cheer for some poor persons or patients in a hospital, preferably a kiddies' hospital. He was passionately fond of kiddies.

That, I believe is the wish of all right-minded turkeys at this season of the year. Although we would rather live (we are young and healthy, are we not?) we are resigned to our fate, knowing it is the only reason for our brief existence.

But we are indignant when we realise that we are often making the supreme sacrifice, not for the benefit of deserving people to whom we all wish a happy Christmas, but for the benefit of thieves and cheats and nasty little Smart Alecs who live by making dirty little deals in public-houses and at street corners and by taking advantage of the shortage of food.

We suppose it is difficult for the authorities to bring these parasites to justice. They do not take the

risks of the comparatively honest burglar and bank robber who is often forced into his way of life by economic circumstances and at least shows a certain amount of courage.

Moreover, whereas the bank robber robs the rich, the poultry pilferer robs the sick and the poor and the little people who cannot afford black market prices.

Of course, in a sane community such people, if caught, would be hanged, but in an insane community, such as this, they hang poor lunatics and perverts and people who commit murder because they are driven mad by injustice or intolerable irritation.

All this may sound strange coming from a turkey, but you must remember that those about to die often see things more clearly than those who have a reasonable expectation of life.

A goose of my acquaintance once told me that, although she was normally puzzled and frightened by life as she saw it in the farmyard, everything cleared up about a week before Christmas, when she even found it possible to excuse the farmer who was arranging her execution.

As this is the last letter I shall ever write (indeed the only letter I have ever written) I thought I would address it to you because, so far as I know, yours is the only column which prints correspondence during my short life. I have also been one of your constant readers, and feel that yours is the best medium for drawing attention to a public scandal, though I am aware that any opinions offered here will have no effect whatever on poultry pilferers who, if they can read at all, probably read nothing but the racing news.

While hoping your wife and family are well and wishing you the merriest Christmas, may I say that, next to appearing on the table of some poor family's house or on the plates of hospital patients, I would like to appear on yours?

I remain, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

A Turkey.

Party conversation

"The new edition of his book 'The Battle of Britain,' Mar-

monty Sends Greetings

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, sends the following Christmas message to all ranks of the Army:

"On this Christmas Day, I send my greetings and good wishes to every officer and man in the British Army. The year 1947 will be remembered by all of us as a hard and difficult year. It has been a year in which shortage and austerity have been the order of the day. The Army's task has not been an easy one. With the return to conditions of peace, it has been necessary to allow the great war machine to run down. This has meant reduction in the size and shape of our armed forces all over the world. Such an undertaking inevitably brings with it difficulties and troubles which cause inconvenience and discomfort. It is to the credit of all ranks that this has in no way affected the spirit of the Army. We have continued to soldier on, our responsibilities and remained unwavering in our loyalties. Difficult times are by no means over. There is much yet to be done, we have to forge this Army of ours, which is now the National Army, into an efficient fighting machine, incorporating our regular and Territorial forces. Let us face the coming year fully aware of this, all the more determined to continue to play our part with courage and firm resolve. In this our year of peace, let us all wish one another a happy Christmas. Good luck to you all."

BY THE WAY • by Beachcomber

WAGGLING PARVA.

AT 7.27 the mechanics had put the finishing touches to their work. Silence fell over the countryside. A greenfinch flew over a chimney. Somewhere in a distant yard a cat was sick. Two old women coughed nervously.

Then at 7.30 the Doctor's head appeared at a porthole, and he cried an order to a mechanic. On the stroke of 7.32 there was a heavy, grinding sound, which announced that the Doctor was hauling back the runge-lever to set the fabulous rocket in motion. As the lever came back inch by inch, the brackets clipped the brackets-edged with a series of loud clicks, and the stay-wires were snapped clear by an automatic gedge-drill. The grind-

ing sound rose to a deafening din, the whole fabric quivered like an iron jelly in an earthquake. Then a rending roar announced that the lever had sunk home into its bell-socket, releasing all the pent-up energy of the sinister monster. A gasp of excitement went up from a thousand throats.

Little Bo-Pest

DAD-DY, isn't there a Conven-ience on which says that pris-on-ers of war must be sent home when peace comes?

No, boy. It says when peace has been for-mal-ly signed.

Is-n't that a law-yer's quib-ble, dad-dy, in the case of our German pris-on-ers? The war is over.

Yes. But—

Per-haps, dad-dy, we are hang-ging on to them so that they can watch Dem-o-cra-cy at work.

That's en-ough, boy! Go to sleep.

Epitaph

Beneath this stone there lies a spiv, Who did not die that men might live, But yet, in dying, did some good, By giving better worms their food.

What do I care?

WOMEN are lowering their skirts and men are shortening their trousers. Many well-dressed men, in the new half-length trousers which exposes the top of the sock. Suspender makers are delighted, since no man will like to go about with his socks down and a great hairy leg showing. Why don't men also take to little pimple-hats, perched on the forehead? A tiny bowler worn thus would be most distinguished, or a cap the size of a half-crown, perched above the ear.

By Ernie Bushmiller

NANCY Business Is at a Standstill



As Sm-o-o-o-oth as black Velvet!
Fitch's
NO BRUSH
SHAVE CREAM
on sale at leading
Stores
SOLE AGENTS: NAN KANG CO., UNION IS STRENGTH

When there was no Christmas Day

BY M. L. STOLLARD

ALWAYS, in these days of Christmas week, one hears tired people gumping about the burden of Christmas!

They would like to escape. They would like to run away. The housewife, with the duty of making provision for several days of closed shops, especially feels this fatigue.

Yet I wonder if Scrooge and Mrs Scrooge would really like to have no Christmas at all?

If so they would have been happy once—under the Commonwealth in England.

In the seventeenth century, Cromwell's Parliament passed a law forbidding the celebration of Christmas as a popish and seditious, and commanding it to be spent as a day of fasting and repentance.

Even the church service was abolished, and the people were ordered to spend the day indoors in sackcloth and ashes. No wonder poor John Evelyn described one of these Christmas Days as "the mournfullest day that ever in my life I have known."

Suspected houses were rudely ransacked for such "heathenish emblems" as holly, mistletoe or ivy, and ladders were searched for contraband Christmas dishes, for in those days—

"Plum broth was Popish, and mince pie
Oh! that was flat idolatry."

This change was most noticeable in London where the City apprentices and children had been in the habit of playing their Christmas games in the streets.

We read that there was "a most strange and still silence" in the Strand. The church bells were hushed. St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey lifted their white roofs over the Thames, and the crowds of happy people in holiday attire no longer poured in and out of their porches.

Brave old England did not take it altogether lying down. In Ipswich and Oxford, where families had been imprisoned for decorating their homes with greenery, the people rose in a body to protest against such extreme measures. Soldiers were sent down from London, and there was "a world of skull-cracking."

In London the Government commanded that shops and markets should be opened and business carried on as usual during Christmas Day, but the people refused to obey, and demanded instead their customary holiday and plum puddings.

Spent rapidly, soldiers were again sent to enforce order, and thus started the famous "Plum Pudding Riots," which were repeated year by year.

Possibly nothing helped the cause of the banished Sturges so much as this ill-advised attempt to abolish the Christmas season.

The only other occasion, when Christmas was not celebrated was in the reign of Henry VIII, when the young King, then at the height of his popularity, lay dangerously ill.

The church bells were silenced, straw was spread in the City, games and merrymaking were forbidden, and a "strict fast"—as observed throughout the country.

This Christmas has always been quoted and remembered as "The Silent Christmas." Do we envy our ancestors in this predicament?

Monty Sends Greetings

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, sends the following Christmas message to all ranks of the Army:

"On this Christmas Day, I send my greetings and good wishes to every officer and man in the British Army. The year 1947 will be remembered by all of us as a hard and difficult year. It has been a year in which shortage and austerity have been the order of the day. The Army's task has not been an easy one. With the return to conditions of peace, it has been necessary to allow the great war machine to run down. This has meant reduction in the size and shape of our armed forces all over the world. Such an undertaking inevitably brings with it difficulties and troubles which cause inconvenience and discomfort. It is to the credit of all ranks that this has in no way affected the spirit of the Army. We have continued to soldier on, our responsibilities and remained unwavering in our loyalties. Difficult times are by no means over. There is much yet to be done, we have to forge this Army of ours, which is now the National Army, into an efficient fighting machine, incorporating our regular and Territorial forces. Let us face the coming year fully aware of this, all the more determined to continue to play our part with courage and firm resolve. In this our year of peace, let us all wish one another a happy Christmas. Good luck to you all."

BY THE WAY • by Beachcomber

WAGGLING PARVA.

AT 7.27 the mechanics had put the finishing touches to their work. Silence fell over the countryside. A greenfinch flew over a chimney. Somewhere in a distant yard a cat was sick. Two old women coughed nervously.

Then at 7.30 the Doctor's head appeared at a porthole, and he cried an order to a mechanic. On the stroke of 7.32 there was a heavy, grinding sound, which announced that the Doctor was hauling back the runge-lever to set the fabulous rocket in motion. As the lever came back inch by inch, the brackets clipped the brackets-edged with a series of loud clicks, and the stay-wires were snapped clear by an automatic gedge-drill. The grind-

ing sound rose to a deafening din, the whole fabric quivered like an iron jelly in an earthquake. Then a rending roar announced that the lever had sunk home into its bell-socket, releasing all the pent-up energy of the sinister monster. A gasp of excitement went up from a thousand throats.

Little Bo-Pest

DAD-DY, isn't there a Conven-ience on which says that pris-on-ers of war must be sent home when peace comes?

No, boy. It says when peace has been for-mal-ly signed.

Is-n't that a law-yer's quib-ble, dad-dy, in the case of our German pris-on-ers? The war is over.

Yes. But—

Per-haps, dad-dy, we are hang-ging on to them so that they can watch Dem-o-cra-cy at work.

That's en-ough, boy! Go to sleep.

Epitaph

Beneath this stone there lies a spiv, Who did not die that men might live, But yet, in dying, did some good, By giving better worms their food.

What do I care?

WOMEN are lowering their skirts and men are shortening their trousers. Many well-dressed men, in the new half-length trousers which exposes the top of the sock. Suspender makers are delighted, since no man will like to go about with his socks down and a great hairy leg showing. Why don't men also take to little pimple-hats, perched on the forehead? A tiny bowler worn thus would be most distinguished, or a cap the size of a half-crown, perched above the ear.

